

Appl. No. 10/749639
Reply to Final action of 3/8/05

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks. Claims 1 and 6 have been editorially amended. The revision of claim 1 is supported, for instance, at page 6, lines 12-16. The revision of claim 6 is supported, for instance, at page 4, lines 8-10. Applicant respectfully submits that these amendments are made to address formal matters only, and that no new issues are raised by the proposed revisions. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-7 are pending.

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection to the extent it is maintained.

Claim 1 recites "a frame member" and "the frame member." This language is supported throughout Applicant's specification, for example, at page 4, lines 8-9 "a front side frame 12 (i.e. a frame member). Thus, the "frame member" is defined for example by numeral 12. (Figure 1.) Numerals 15 and 16 respectively define frame forming members that are joined together to form the frame member 12, while numeral 11 refers to a vehicle body frame generally. (Page 4, lines 20-23.) Applicant respectfully asserts that the language "frame member" is supported and definite.

Claim 1 recites "opposite faces which face each other, provided in one of a front portion and a rear portion of the vehicle." As above, the frame member and frame forming members are defined, for example, respectively as numerals 12, 15, and 16. It is clear from Figure 1 that the frame member 12 includes "opposite faces which face each other" by the configuration and arrangement of frame forming members 15 and 16. Applicant respectfully asserts that this language is supported and definite.

Claim 1 recites "provided in one of a front portion and a rear portion of the vehicle." This feature is clearly supported for example at page 4, lines 8-11 (for a front portion of a vehicle) and at page 10, lines 19-24 (for a rear portion of a vehicle). Thus, Applicant respectfully asserts that this feature is supported and definite.

Claim 1 now recites a load imposing device "substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the frame member, when impact on the frame member along the longitudinal direction of the frame member is anticipated or imposed." That is, there is one longitudinal direction claimed, where the loading device is disposed substantially perpendicular to the frame member. (Figure 1 and Page 6, lines 12-16.) Thus, the frame

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member may experience impact along its longitudinal direction. Applicant respectfully asserts that this feature is supported and definite.

Claim 6 now recites "a side frame." This feature is supported throughout Applicant's specification, and for example at page 4, lines 8-19. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 6 is definite.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the features of the claims are sufficiently supported and clearly defined by the instant disclosure. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Negado (U.S. Patent No. 3,831,921). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection to the extent it is maintained.

Claim 1 recites a body frame of a vehicle including, among other features, a frame member having opposite faces which face each other, and a load imposing device for imposing a load on the opposite faces of the frame member when impact on the frame member along the longitudinal direction of the frame member is anticipated or imposed. Negado, however, fails to disclose at least the above features of claim 1.

Particularly, Negado does not teach or suggest: a frame member having opposite faces which face each other; a load imposing device for imposing a load on the opposite faces of the frame member toward at least two opposite directions; and the load imposing device imposing a load when impact on the frame member along the longitudinal direction of the frame member is anticipated or imposed.

In contrast, Negado provides a collision guard system in conjunction with a front bumper of an automobile. Negado mentions an impact loop 10 with two opposite ends that are curled inwardly and welded to a front bumper through horizontal members 15. (Figure 1, Col. 2, lines 40-52.) An absorption assembly 14 resides on the inside of the impact loop and between the loop and the bumper. (Figure 1, Col. 2, lines 53-62.) In fact, Negado merely provides springs attached to a bumper of a vehicle to absorb impact. The cited reference absorbs the energy from an impact only by the spring 18 in a direction in which the impact is imposed. Thus, Negado must provide a large sized absorption assembly. (Figure 1.)

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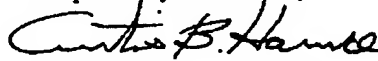
In the claimed invention, however, a load is imposed on the opposite faces of the frame member toward at least two opposite directions which are substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the frame member, when impact on the frame member along the longitudinal direction of the frame member is anticipated or imposed. (Page 6, lines 12-16.) That is, a load is imposed on the opposite faces of the frame member, by the load imposing device in a direction perpendicular to the longitudinal direction of the frame member in which the impact is imposed. The claimed invention recited by claim 1 provides advantages that the buckling of the frame member itself can be controlled by improving the rigidity of the frame member itself, thereby securing necessary strength without unduly increasing the size of the body frame of the vehicle. (Page 6, lines 17-22.) Thus, Negado does not anticipate the features of claim 1 and does not enjoy its advantages.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is allowable over Negado. Claims 2-7 depend upon claim 1. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are allowable over Negado for at least the same reasons with respect to claim 1, and need not be distinguished separately. Applicant reserves the right to make further argument with respect to any of claims 2-7 at a later date. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

With the above amendments and remarks, Applicant believes that the pending claims are in a condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration by the Examiner in the form of a Notice of Allowance. If any questions arise, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's representative at the number listed below.

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Respectfully Submitted,



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